*“If you want to do a few small things right, do them yourself. If you want to do great things and make a big impact, learn to delegate.” - John C. Maxwell, author of*[Developing the Leaders Around You](https://www.amazon.com/Developing-Leaders-Around-John-Maxwell/dp/0785281118)

Delegation is one of the key tools that can help us achieve our goals with more ease and enjoyment. Delegating tasks or roles can facilitate personal growth in ourselves and in others which contributes to building a team of more knowledgeable, skilled and resourceful individual contributors while delegating more responsibility for decision making increases in productivity, morale, and commitment, all of which impact team culture.

But delegating takes some practice to get it just right! It is a skill we acquire by applying it and reflecting on the outcomes time and time again.

Let us consider some common obstacles to employing delegation:

* Time that required to define a task, role or responsibility and pass
* Challenges in identifying a person to delegate it to
* Loss of control over the quality of the task, role or responsibility
* Fear of others perceiving it as own lack of competence to complete the task
* Assumption that others are already too busy to take on anything else
* Being viewed as wavering from your own responsibilities

While all the above points can be valid, the opposite is also true. Taking on a new task, role or responsibility can be a door to new experiences and personal growth, and as such - a welcome opportunity for many individuals.

**Steps to Successful Delegating:**

**Mindset for Delegating:**

* Trust that others will welcome the challenge, that they will learn and do well
* Done is better than perfect. Accept mistakes and see them as learning opportunities
* Keep in mind that doing it all yourself can lead to overload or burnout

**Identify the task, role or responsibility to delegate. Gather resources:**

* Start with small, quick, “low-risk” tasks
* Describe the objective not just the process – the what not just how
* Be clear what it will look like when it is done
* Identify what resources will be needed

**Identify the individual to delegate to**:

* Make an inventory of people’s interests and aspirations. Don’t hesitate to query people about their interest even if you’ve already done that in the past. Consider both informal and formal ways of doing it, for example: use time at the next team event or send a survey

**Set the other person up for success**

* “Paint done!”\* Describe the project and let the other person reflect it back to you and let them ask questions.
* Set aside your attachment to how things have been done in the past and encourage new, creative ways to accomplish the task
* Discuss available resources and check what else they may need
* Schedule regular check-ins
* Develop a mutually agreeable schedule including the end of the project as well as

Delegating tasks, roles or responsibilities is a hallmark of collaborative team culture and it empowers others to lead while cultivating commitment to shared goals and shared purpose. And while delegating requires some investment of time up front, it can also contribute to a more balanced workload overtime. And here’s the good news, with some practice and patience, we can all learn to employ delegation more efficiently over time! That is a huge contribution to ourselves and our teams.

**Resources:**

* \*Dare to lead” by Brene Brown
* [Hidden Value: How Great Companies Achieve Extraordinary Results with Ordinary People](https://www.amazon.com/Hidden-Value-Companies-Extraordinary-Ordinary/dp/0875848982) by Jeffrey Pfeffer and Charles O’Reilly
* 8 Ways Leaders Delegate Successfully: <https://hbrascend.org/topics/8-ways-leaders-delegate-successfully/>